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ABSTRACT

The most developed supra-national language-based movement today is la Francophonie, the movement representing all of the populations of the world that speak French. French is an international language and is spoken in many parts of the world, although the exact number of francophones is not known. La Francophonie has a number of major international constituent organizations and has strong support among some populations, particularly in France and Quebec. Despite these factors, the authenticity of the movement is questioned, and criticisms of the movement and of one of its major organizations, the Agency of Cultural and Technical Cooperation, include these: that it is neo-colonialist; that member governments lack a genuine commitment; that French is not the authentic language of many of the populations adhering to it; that French does not possess the intrinsic qualities it is claimed to have; and that "francite," the quality of possessing ethnically or genetically French origins, has greater authenticity. However, these arguments are not supportable, and "francite" as a movement provides more of a threat, in the form of racism, than does la Francophonie. (MSE)

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ASSESSING THE AUTHENTICITY OF A SUPRA-NATIONAL LANGUAGE-BASED MOVEMENT : LA FRANCOPHONIE

William Walter Bostock

DISCUSSION PAPERS IN GEOLINGUISTICS

No. 12

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Assessing the Authenticity of a Supra-National Language-Based Movement : La Francophonie

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W.W. Bostock
Hobart, 1985

One of the great problems of politics is to assess the authenticity of genuineness, validity and entitlement to acceptance of the various movements, groups, organisations and even nations which make claims on behalf of themselves and their adherents. Many long and most tragic of wars have been fought on the basis of incorrect evaluations of authenticity.

It is thus a legitimate concern of political scientists and practitioners of related disciplines to attempt to assess the authenticity of movements claiming to represent millions of adherents across many national boundaries on grounds of common language-use, and regardless of race, ethnicity, religion and ideology, i.e. the supra-national language-based movement.

Although there are a number of such movements in existence today, working through such languages as Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and Bahasa-Malaysia-Indonesia, the furthest developed is francophonie,* the movement which claims to represent all of the populations of the world which speak French. The term 'francophonie' is believed to have been coined by a French geographer, Onésime Réclus, in the late 19th century (Deniau, 1983:7)

At a time when world maps were divided into units of nation, colony and race, Reclus wanted a new term that would describe populations that spoke French, and thus introduced francophonie from the Latin Francus (French) and the Greek phone (sound). Thus his definition linked people by language rather than state, nation, race or ethnicity. However, the term fell into disuse until it was revived in the 1960s, specifically with the publication of a special edition of the intellectual revue Esprit on the subject of French in various parts of the world as discussed by a select group of prestigious writers. About the same time, a number of important political leaders notably President Leopold Sedar Senghor of Senegal began agitating for the formation of an international movement of francophone peoples.

Dictionaries and encyclopaediae began soon after including the term francophonie, the first being Quid in its 1968 edition, and today the term has official recognition in that it is used by governments such as those of France, Canada and Belgium. It is also becoming recognised and used in the English-speaking world and could be defined as follows

francophone (adjective) French-speaking

francophonie (noun) the conglomeration of those parts of the world where French is spoken.

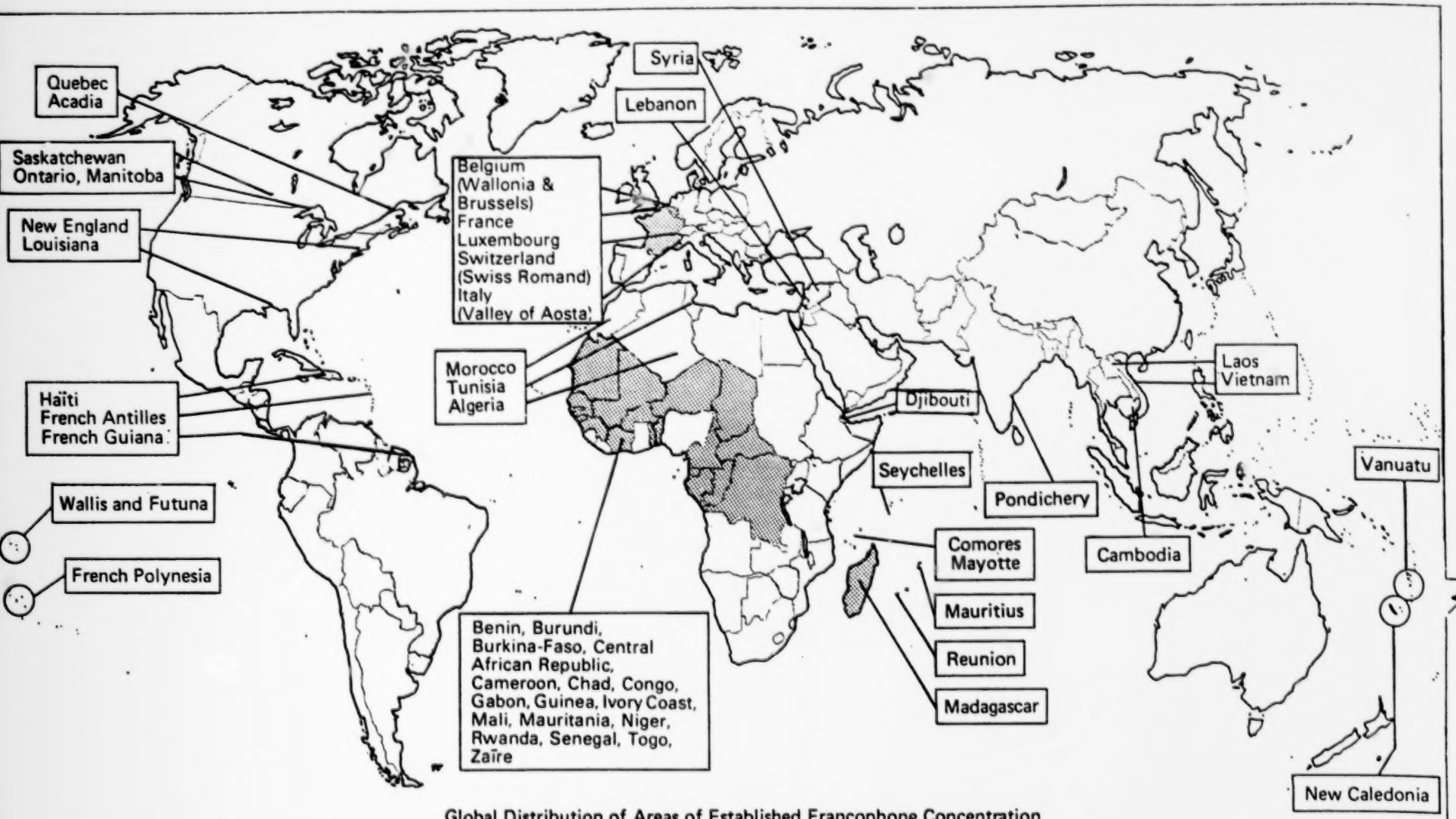
To denote the organisation of those nations, provinces, regions and communities where French is spoken, the term la Francophonie (with a definite article and capitalisation) may be used. Although it is today a clearly recognisable movement, it is one with a number of constituent organisations, and whose adherents are variable in the degree of their adhesion, (which is one of the ground on which doubts as to authenticity have been expressed). Another factor to note is that the type of French spoken in the various regions is variable, though less so than with nearly all other languages. Standard French has some degree of universality among francophones, unlike for example English, Spanish or German (Clyne, 1984). Standard French remains the prestige form, even where considerable variations exist (Bourhis, 1982)

The Distribution of French

As is clear from the map, French has a truly global spread, but it is impossible to state with any certainty the total number of francophones, and in any case, as an exercise in linguistic demography, it is beyond the scope of this monograph. As a working figure most estimates of the total number of francophones world wide are around 90 million (le Gentil, 1978: 8-13), although the number may be slightly less.

> '... the real number of francophones, those from France included, probably does not reach 90 million people, which is little in comparison to the 350 million anglophones, 200 million hispanophones, 120 million arabophones and 116 million lusophones.' (Roger Cans, Le Devoir, December 10 1979, quoted by Old, 1984: 12-13).

Another estimate is that of Salon (1983:72) who distinguishes francophones by mother-tongue (69,520,000) and by education (15,920,000) giving a global total of 85,440,000 persons, somewhat lower than the figure of Deniau of 'about 100 million' (1983:45). Another writer, Malka (1980) suggests that the number of persons to whom French is a second language could be considerably higher taking the total to around 180 million, but on this criterion, Deniau suggests a figure of 264 million or 6.5% the world's population (1983:45), while another estimate by



Global Distribution of Areas of Established Francophone Concentration

Note: While this map shows areas of established francophone concentration, it must be remembered that there are smaller dispersals of francophones in virtually every corner of the globe.

Turcotte (personal communication, 1984) is 100 million for all categories, that is, mother-tongue, second language, or French as a foreign language. For Europe and North America, accurate survey information is not available, and for developing nations personal estimates are all that exists in relation to many countries and regions, although work is currently being carried out by researchers from Laval University.

In reality, actual numbers will never be known, but 90 million seems a suitable working number, revealing francophonie as a substantial world-wide language-based movement.

The Raison d'Etre of Francophonie

In the 18th and 19th centuries French was the sole language of international diplomacy, but lost its position to English in a process which reached its climax just after the First World War. In 1919, on the insistence of President Wilson of the U.S.A. and Lloyd George, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, the Treaty of Versailles was drawn up in English as well as French, thus representing a departure from the previous exclusivity of French. (Rickard, 1974).

At the end of World War II, when the foundations of the United Nations Organisations was being undertaken in San Francisco (April-June 1945) only English, Spanish and Russian were proposed as working languages and French was only admitted after energetic protests and with a majority of only one. Then in December 1967 a special debate was needed before equal publication of communications in French and English was secured. (Rickard, 1974: 150-151).

Since those times, and as a result of carefully planned, systematic and sustained efforts, French has made a dramatic comeback, such that today it is not only an official language of the U.N., but also its subsidiary agencies of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, and the World Health Organisation. It is also a working language in the International Labor Organisation, the Organisation of Economic and Cultural Development, and even the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (of which France is not a member). French is the most commonly used language of the European Economic Community and French

shares equally with English the same position in the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

French is also a leading language in the Red Cross, the International Court of Justice, and the International Standards Organisation. It is the only official language of the Universal Postal Union, such that in all member states, all documents concerning international postage are written in French as well as English or another language.

The Vatican has chosen French among other languages as a language of its diplomacy, and it uses French in its training courses for missionaries. The Universal Jewish Alliance uses French in its schools alongside Hebrew. However this organisation which is of 19th century French Jewish origins appears to be in decline. Its purpose was to spread French language and culture among Sephardic Jews of the former Ottoman Empire and other non-Ashkenazic areas. (Anonymous reader, 1985). French shares with Arabic the position of an official language of the Islamic Conference and the Arab League. (Salon, 1976: 301-302).

Although French is now second to English as an international language, its position as an international language retains considerable power.

The Major Organisational Forms of la Francophonie

As early as the 19th century some people saw a need to organise a world-wide movement based on the French language. The Alliance Française, an organisation dedicated to the promotion of French language and culture but without reference to ideology, race or religion, was founded in 1883, and included in its initiating committee such figures as de Lesseps and Pasteur. (Bruezière, 1983). So far-reaching and enduring were its efforts that the Alliance Française could be described as the forerunner of La Francophonie, which as a movement only gained an organisational form after World War II.

The organisation of francophonie at supranational level was not the result of a single initiative, rather, it was a continuing process which is still evolving today. This process is one of re-evaluating exisiting roles and creating new ones by various participants. When France fell in 1940, France and its language underwent a catastrophic decline in prestige. A small aspect of this with considerable implication for

francophonie was that the centre of French language publishing had to be shifted to Canada. (Deniau, 1983:49). After World War II, France was keen to re-establish its colonial empire and recover its prestige, only to suffer a humiliating military defeat in Indo-China in 1954, and was forced to wind-up most of its empire elsewhere and today there is strife in Mayotte, New Caledonia, and some of the Overseas Departments. Some notable French statesmen realised that the future lay in a voluntary organisation based on co-operation. Though fully aware of this need, and having facilitated the independence of Algeria, President de Gaulle preferred to let the concept of francophonie develop of its own accord, probably through fear of stamping it with the mark of neo-colonialism, an accusation which is still being frequently made. Deniau reports that de Gaulle only used the term once, and that was in 1968 when hearing of the death of his friend the Quebec Prime Minister Daniel Johnson

'Thus a great loss for francophonie'* (Deniau, 1983: 54).

The nature of this low key and unobtrusive role by France has been continued today, although President Mitterrand has declared himself as 'passionately in favour of francophonie'* (Deniau, 1983:56).

Though for the greater part of its history neglected by France, the province of Quebec, Canada's only province with a francophone majority, has also re-evaluated its role. Traditionally Quebec has distanced itself from France. In two World Wars there was significant opposition in Quebec to Canadian participation, not only through anti-British feeling but also through lack of identity with France but through some support for Mussolini's concept of a 'corporate state' linking Church and State. Even in the post-1945 period, Quebec has shown ambiguity in its view of and support for France.

From the French side, recognition of and sympathy for the cause of Quebec was dramatically stated by the French President General de Gaulle when he gave voice to the slogan of the Quebec separatists in 1967, thus marking a turning point in the evolution of franco-quebec relations, which are subtle, complex and far from straightforward even today, and are the product of affection, pride and jealousy from both sides. The

two largest cities of these two concentrations of francophonie, Paris and Montreal, are foci of cultural and linguistic generating activity but by no means to the exclusion of other centres.

At the organisational level, some of the first steps were the Association of French Language Journalists (A.I.J.L.F.) and in 1954 of the French Cultural Union, in 1958 the International Association of French-language Sociologists, and in 1970 the Association of Partially or Wholly French-language Universities (A.U.P.E.L.F.). In the founding of these organisations most of the initiative was taken by Quebecers. In the field of broadcasting, co-productions became a common line of development for finance, production and distribution, and while Canada at first found reluctance on the part of the French authorities, willing partners were found in Belgium and Switzerland, and with the spectacular success of several ventures the French authorities re-evaluated their position and successfully joined (Personal Communication with a senior Canadian Broadcasting Corporation officer). In 1984 TV5 Francophone Television commenced broadcasting through the ECS R Satellite, thus providing another cultural outlet for francophonie.

At official level, the first francophone contact was in 1960 when a conference of Ministers of Education from France and Africa and Malagasy states was convened, followed soon after by a similar conference of Ministers of Youth and Sports. Within France, a High Committee for the Defense and Expansion of the French Language was created on December 1, 1965, while in 1967 the first Biennale to discuss francophonie took place at Namur, Belgium, under the chairmanship of Professor Guillermou. (Deniau, 1983:52).

Developments were not confined to the European and North American region, however. In 1965 a number of African nations joined to form the Organisation of the African and Malagasy Community (O.C.A.M.), following the inspiration of three francophone African leaders, Léopold Sèdar Senghor of Sénégal, Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia, and Hamani Diori of Niger. Bourguiba's concept envisaged a 'Commonwealth à la française', African unity, and rapprochement with France. O.C.A.M. defined francophonie as a 'spiritual community of nations which use French'. This ambitious plan to link all the francophone nations, was not to be realised, and failed to gain from within the African continent the

support of Algeria and Morocco. During this time of African acitivity, France maintained a 'discrete silence' in the words of Xavier Deniau, who was at that time a parliamentarian at the heart of negotiations. (Deniau, 1983:53).

France was at this time still re-evaluating its attitude, in a process that led to the historic signing on November 23, 1965 of a Cultural Agreement between itself and Quebec, the first agreement ever when France would accept to share the responsibility for its language. Article I of this Agreement stated

> 'The Government of the French Republic and Government of Quebec will closely cooperate in the promotion and diffusion of the French language'.*

The signing of this agreement, probably more than any other, marked the birth of La Francophonie, the organisational form of francophonie. It showed at once the perspicacity of French and Quebec leaders, the French in sharing their patrimony, and the Quebec in awareness of the difficult nature of the task ahead of preserving and securing francophone identity, particularly in view of the Quiet Revolution taking place in Quebec and transforming 300 year-old cultural patterns and leading to a secular state, with all of its problems for language and culture maintenance.

Other developments were also taking place though. In 1967 the International Association of Parliamentarians of the French-language was created, and this in turn led to the creation of the Agency of Cultural and Technical Cooperation in 1970, which was to become the central organising body of la Francophonie.

Within France, the legislators were anxious to encourage francophone developments. Article 2 of the Superior Education Act of 1968 provided for universities to 'take the necessary steps to develop international cooperation, notably with partially or wholly francophone universities'.*

In 1973, a Committee for Francophonie was established, and a year later, an Interministerial Committee for Francophone Affairs, while within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a Francophone Affairs Section was also established.

In January 1973, a French law for the first time recognised a 'French linguistic and cultural entity'. Law 73.42 of January 9, 1973 (Code of Nationality) recognised such an entity for the purposes of granting naturalisation, and in so doing, provided an opportunity for francophone persons to become French citizens.

In Quebec in the 1960s the Quiet Revolution mentioned above took place, based on the concept of rattrapage or 'catching up' through modernisation of the whole of society in Church-State relations, education, technology, administration, and an assertion of Quebec identity. It led in 1968 to the setting up of the Gendron Commission to investigate the position of French language rights and recommended in its report of 1972 the legislative reinforcement of French as official language in Quebec.

In 1969 the Quebec Government passed Bill 63 which enhanced French language rights and set up an office of the French Language. In 1974 Bill 22 was passed making French the sole official language of Quebec and in 1977 an even stronger Bill 101, the Charter of the French Language, was passed with a view to cementing the place of French in Quebec society for ever.

But while these legislative measures had been enacted to protect French in Quebec and in France, at the international level a number of organisational steps were being taken.

The first of these was the creation of the International Association of Parliamentarians of the French Language, largely at the instigation of Léopold Sédar Senghor in 1966. This organisation which is actively functioning today, brings together parliamentarians from 47 countries from almost every part of the globe. The value of this organisation can be seen from the fact that members join as individual parliamentarians rather than as governmental representatives, such that it provides a forum for francophonie at a high level embracing members from countries which may or may not wish to formally align themselves with the movement.

From the meetings of the International Association of Parliamentarians of the French Language came an initiative to create a formal

organisation to unify la Francophonie at governmental level. In 1969 at Niamey, Niger, the representatives of 28 francophone nations assembled and agreed upon the foundation of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation. At that Conference the French Minister of Culture, André Malraux, committed his nation's full support, thus indicating that France had overcome its fears of a loss of hegemony in francophone Africa (Gordon, 1978:87).

The original aims of the Agency as set down at the Conference were: to facilitate cultural and technical exchanges between member states; to standardise and simplify administrative and educational practices, in for example, civil service training programmes; to provide mutual technical assistance in for example education and health; to share information; and to provide for cultural exchanges. The French language was of course to be the working language of the organisation, but the indigenous languages, cultures and sovereignty of each member state were to be respected, and on questions of ideology and politics, the Agency was to observe strict neutrality. The Agency was to collaborate with all existing international and regional organisations and take account of all existing forms of development assistance. The permanent headquarters of the Agency were to be located in Paris, and general meetings were to be held at least every two years in cities of the different member states.

In has today 30 full member-states, 6 associated states and 2 participating governments.

The member-states are

Belgium
Benin
Burkina-Faso (formerly Upper Volta)
Burundi
Canada
Central African Republic
Chad
Comores
Congo
Djibouti
Dominica
France
Gabon
Guinea
Haïti

Ivory Coast
Lebanon
Luxembourg
Mali
Mauritius
Monaco
Niger
Rwanda
Senegal
Seychelles
Togo
Tunisia
Vanuatu
Vietnam
Zaire

The associated states are

Cameroun
Guinea-Bissau
Laos
Mauritania
Morocco
Saint Lucia

The participating governments are

New Brunswick
Quebec

In addition, Egypt is preparing an application to join the Agency.

Thus, of the world's wholly or partly francophone states, all but three (Algeria, Madagascar and Switzerland) are members or associates of, or participants in, the Agency, a remarkable indication of the acceptance of a body in only fifteen years of existence. It should be noted though that in the case of some members, links with francophonie are tenuous. Guinea-Bissau is lusophone, and in Vietnam, French is nearly extinct. Privately, considerable doubts were expressed as to the wisdom of allowing Vietnam to join, and as a member, Vietnam has criticised the place of French with the Agency. (Private communication, senior French administrator, 1984).

This difficulty notwithstanding, the future direction of its development is to establish and strengthen contacts with other organisations, both governmental and non-governmental, that have some links with the movement. There are in addition a number of other bodies which are concerned with specialised areas of francophonie, most notably the

International Council for the French Language, which specialises in linguistic questions. There is also a grouping of francophone nations in the United Nations, in which some 30 delegations have been meeting regularly since 1966, and a number of organisations representing a diverse range of francophone activities, from writing, to science, education, medicine and law. The total collectivity of organisations of governments, associations and private individuals thus constitutes a truly supra-national language-based movement. How genuine, durable and valid is that movement?

The Assessment of Authencity

There is no single reliable test that can be used in the assessment of authenticity. The ability to withstand destruction through genocide, war, hardship or assimilation is a valid criterion over a sufficient period of time. La Francophonie and its instrumentalities have all been accused of lack of authenticity, and it is a vitally important exercise to examine the arguments that have been brought forward.

Many of the criticisms have been aimed specifically at the Agency of Cultural and Technical Co-operation, but some critics have also discussed the movement as a whole. The criticisms could be listed as:

(1) francophonie is neo-colonialist
(2) member governments lack a genuine commitment
(3) French is not the authentic language of many of the populations whose adherence is claimed
(4) the French language does not possess the intrinsic qualities claimed of it and
(5) francité is a movement of greater authenticity, where francité means the quality of possessing ethnically or genetically French origins. These criticisms must be examined in turn.

(1) The conception of la Francophonie as a vehicle of neo-colonialism was one made from the outset. At the first Niamey Conference the Foreign Minister of Madagascar, Jacques Kabenmananjara, expressed the contrary view that francophonie was a vehicle of protest against colonialism and a medium in which to express black identity (Gordon, 1978:89). Certainly Senghor saw no contradiction between francophonie

and la négritude (black identity): the concept was in fact one which he and two other intellectuals had introduced. The idea that France would dominate la Francophonie was first expressed by Jacques Berque in 1967, and is a view with which some senior French civil servants are reported to be covertly in agreement (Gordon, 1978: 94n). As has already been noted, de Gaulle was sensitive to these criticisms and chose not to overtly promote a French role in la Francophonie, preferring to foot the bill to the extent of 45 per cent of its total budget, a proportion still roughly the same today. (Agence de Co-opération Culturelle et technique, 1981). The present author's own interviews within both the Quai d'Orsay and the Agency Headquarters in Paris have failed to elicit indications of cynicism of the kind encountered by Gordon, but admittedly this is inconclusive. The fact that its founders were non-French francophones, as are many of its most vigorous promoters today, does indicate some absence, at least on their part, of feelings of neo-colonialism.

(2) The motives of governments or any other type of political actor are notoriously difficult to assess. Colin Old raised these doubts when he wrote in a monograph on Quebec's relations with francophonie

> '....questions are raised as to Quebec's sincerity in La Francophonie ...'
> (Old, 1984:3).

Old went on to argue that francophonie was nothing more than a stepping stone in the ambition of Quebec's political leaders to achieve independent statehood

> 'Since the P.Q. (Parti Québécois) is dedicated to Quebec becoming sovereign it seems only logical that the government is using aspects of Quebec's external affairs, e.g. francophonie, to promote its independence project'. (Old, 1984:47)

As evidence, Old points to Quebec's multiple role within francophonie and the numerous points of friction that this has created with the Canadian federal government. Although in the end he concedes that further research is necessary

> 'Unearthing the connections between francophonie and the sovereignty issue offers a rich field of endeavour for further investigation'. (Old, 1984:47).

In assessing this argument, it must be noted that a doubt over the sincerity of Quebec's desire to maintain its linguistic and cultural heritage has often been expressed, particularly by English Canadians, and yet that desire has continued to burn unabated for nearly 400 years. (Williams, 1980). There does not seem to be a contradiction between a desire for independence and a desire to participate in francophonie, both desires could be equally genuine, and in fact they could be said to amount to the same desire, specifically, to preserve an identity as expressed in French.

Brian Weinstein also expressed doubts as to the sincerity of some members of the French Government when he wrote

> '... the development of such a movement is clouded not only by the diversity of its participants but by the conflict between those who want to build a genuine world force and those who want to use Francophonie to pursue the narrower interests of the French government.' (Weinstein, 1983:167).

In view of the persistence of France's colonial role it is doubtful whether these suspicions as to motives will ever disappear. It is quite probable that such views do exist within the French Government, particularly in defence circles, but to the present, they have not been sufficiently in evidence as to invalidate the movement.

(3) That French is not the authentic language of many peoples whose adherence is claimed.

Weinstein does not accept that francophonie is an authentic expression of peoples other than those of France, Quebec, Wallonia, Romand Switzerland and several other small areas. Outside these areas he sees French as a language of elites intent upon maintaining their position of power not only against 'Americanism' but also against local nationalism. (Weinstein, 1976(a): 266-7).

He has pointed to the fact that Mouvement Militant Mauricien (M.M.M.), which claims to speak for the masses of Mauritius, demands a cultural revolution, including the replacement of French and English by Créole (or Kreol), and to the leaders of the student revolt of May 1972 in Madagascar who demanded the use of Malagasy in education and government. (Weinstein, 1976(a):295)

In evaluating these criticisms, a number of points can be made. The elitist nature of the dispersal of francophonie in the developing and ex-colonial nations has never been denied. Senghor estimated the percentage of francophones in the black African francophone countries at between 8 and 10 per cent. (le Gentil, 1976:12)

But many writers from the developing world have expressed appreciation of the value of French as a medium of international communication. For example the Arabic writer Tahar ben Jalloun stated in an article in Le Monde

> 'If I had written in Arabic, this debate would not have taken place... I would have had to wait until the year 2000 to be translated into French, to be read and discussed'.* (Tahar ben Jalloun, 1982:2)

In addition, many other nations have found it necessary to rely upon an international language, as well as having a 'national language'. For example India has had Hindi as national language since 1950, but still is forced to rely upon English as lingua franca and 'Associate Official Language'. (Le Page, 1964). In the Republic of South Africa denial of instruction in English as part of a policy of divide and rule has been practiced. (Brooks, 1968:59). It would seem unlikely then to believe that in those developing nations affiliated with francophonie there would be reluctance on the part of the masses to maintain an identification with an international language such as French, particularly when it provides access to the outside world as well as facilitating development aid, famine relief and co-operation in the form of field visits by experts.

(4) The French language does not possess the intrinsic qualities claimed of it. A number of figures have written in very lyrical form as to the properties of French, among them Charles the Fifth of France, Rivard and Voltaire. It is beyond the scope of this work to attempt to assess these comments, but Weinstein questions the properties of clarity, precision, harmony and logic which have widely been attributed to the French language; he questions the actual numbers of effective francophones which he notes has been stated to be as high as 200 million; he questions the international standardisation of the French language, quoting the Belgian writer Pol Vandromme who accused

francophonie of masking a 'totalitarian conservatism or a subversive movement ... Which everywhere serves the French political empire by dividing nations such as Belgium or Canada. (Weinstein, 1976(a): 274). Weinstein also questions the often expressed view that French has instrumental value, considered already under (3), particularly in relation to African nations, in that it opens communication with the outside world and allows greater access to science and technology.

(5) Francité is a movement of greater authentity than francophonie. The concept of francité is one that could consistitute a competing alternative to that of francophonie. C. Ph. Bodinier (1984:9) believes that the term made its first appearance in a novel Aller et Retour by the Swiss writer H. de Ziegler in 1943, and did not appear again until 1957 when it was used by Roland Barthes when he spoke of the 'pommes-frites as the culinary symbol of francité'*. Later the Belgian writer J. Boly spoke of 'our spiritual vocation: francité: our world-wide expression: francophonie'* while later Xavier Deniau stated that 'francité is the soul of francophonie'*. (Deniau, 1983:13).

Francité can thus be described as the 'totality of characteristics of French civilisation'* as in le Grand Larousse (Quoted by Deniau, 1983:13). However it also has another meaning applied with increasing frequency to it, and that if that francité refers to a set of ethnic or genetic characteristics, described by Old as:

> 'The French ethnic community where French is the mother tongue of the population; primarily associated with Europe and Canada.' (Old, 1984: iii)

This was clearly not the original sense of francité, as used for example by Senghor when he gave an address at the Université Laval in 1966 stating that:

> '... the spirit of the civilisation, or the French culture is that which I will call francité.'* (Deniau, 1983:13).

In this sense, Senghor as an African could himself possess francité, the second sense of French ethnicity, where French genes are required, he could not. Thus, in the second sense of francité, francophone Africans, Arabs, Asians, Inuit, Polynesians, etc. must be excluded. In effect,

this situation has found institutional expression in some recent organisations that have been created. There is for example a Conference of French Ethnic Communities (La Conference des communautes ethnique de de langue francaise), which is a non-governmental assembly of European and North American French ethnic communities (Old, 1984:27). This conference has direct contacts with some grass-roots organisations in Quebec according to Old. Another account of a meeting of the Conference in Quebec City reported that it was attended by Wallonie Libra, Jura Libra, several organisations from the Val d'Aosta, the Federation des francophones hors Quebec, and a few New England organisations. All were white and of more or less French descent, and although the political battles of each group had little in common, it was an emotional experience. (Anonymous reader, 1985).

It is therefore legitimate to ask whether francité has become synonous with ethnic and racial exclusivity, that is, a 'francophonie for whites only'? There are undoubtedly such strands of thought in France and in Quebec, and an analogy has been made between Quebec nationalism and Afrikanerdom, the expression of another former colonial minority. Roger Omond for example has written that:

> 'René Lévesque and his Parti Québécois might be Afrikaner Nationalists' (Omond, 1981:9)

and goes on to refer to similar attempts to form a new society, opposition to integration, job reservation, and some other similarities, though of course, in attitudes to indigenous peoples there is an acute difference.

However, Bodinier believes that the first sense of francite (civilisation) is the prevailing one:

> "As for French ethnicity, and the absurd suspicions of 'racism' (race depends on anatomical characteristics), it is nothing more than a 'community of French language (Bodinier, 1984:9)

If, as has been suggested the majority of the populations of the greater number of francophone nations do not have an authentic attachment to francophonie, it being nothing more than a manipulation by elites, then in the long term francophonie may come to be co-terminous with francite (in the sense of ethnicity). Even here, there are

difficulties in making francophonie co-terminous with francité as Luxembourg is a white European country with a political commitment to francophonie, but which is not part of francité, and similarly the Bruxellois are a heterogeneous mixture, mainly of Flemish origin, who are more or less assimilated to French and thus are part of francophonie but not francité.

If, at some stage in the future, francophonie and francité are to become co-terminous, the above exceptions notwithstanding, then the ideal of a multi-racial and multi-cultural francophonie as espoused by Senghor, Bourguiba, and many others would have failed, and French would revert to the status of a regional and ethnic language.

Conclusion

Probably the only true test as to the authenticity of a movement based on language, culture, or any other dimension of human attachment is the test of time, that is, the durability of such an attachment through great adversity. While the organisational forms of la Francophonie are comparatively new, francophonie is not. On the North American continent it has in Quebec survived a rigorous testing in the universally understood knowledge that with language goes identity. As a former Quebec Prime Minister has written

> Being ourselves is essentially a matter of keeping and developing a personality that has survived for three and a half centuries. At the core of this personality is the fact that we speak French ... To be unable to live as ourselves, as we should live, in our own language and according to our own ways, would be like living without a heart. (Lévesque, 1968(1977): 14-15).

Whether this sentiment extends beyond the areas of francité remains to be seen. Even one of its most critical observers, Brian Weinstein, is prepared to concede that

> '..Francophonie could become an important transnational actor in world politics'. (Weinstein, 1983:167)

In the light of the various arguments considered and evaluated - neo-colonialism, lack of governmental commitment, lack of commitment to the French language, the nature of that language, and the competing claims of francité - it would appear that none of these is of overwhelming force. By contrast, it would appear that la Francophonie

has not been used for colonialist aims, that governments do find it useful, and that the French language is a valid and valuable instrument of communication in over 30 nations. Only in the threat of racism in the form of a 'francophonie for whites only' or francité does there seem to be a question mark over the future of la Francophonie. But until such an alternative movement is to fully develop, one is reasonably entitled to assess this particular supra-national language-based movement as authentic.

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